

585 - State Mandated Testing Policy

Approved by GWA Board of Directors, 1/22/2015

Revised 5/28/2015

George Washington Academy (GWA), as a public school, complies with all state-mandated testing requirements and procedures and is dedicated to using assessment to guide our instruction. As with all tests, teachers are encouraged to use the results from state-required testing to determine what information students understand or do not understand. While we find the information provided very valuable and a credible resource for determining students' needs, we respect the rights of our parents and students. Additionally, we recognize Utah Code 53A-15-1403:which states:

- The State Board of Education shall ensure through board rule that neither the LEA nor its employees are negatively impacted through school grading or employee evaluation due to a student not taking a test pursuant to Subsection (9)(a).
- Any student who is in school and not participating in testing should be engaged in a meaningful educational activity.
- At the request of a student's parent or guardian, an LEA shall excuse a student from taking an assessment that:
 - is federally mandated
 - is mandated by the state
 - requires the use of:
 - a state assessment system, or
 - software that is provided or paid for by the state*

Consistent with the law, GWA allows parents to opt out students in accordance to the procedures set forth by the Utah State Board of Education. GWA does not allow parents to opt their students out of school or teacher developed summative or formative tests outside of these categories, as we believe these tests key to assessing student understanding and performance, and guiding future instruction.

Parents who choose to opt-out their children from statewide testing, must notify the school in writing of their desire to opt the student out of testing. Because a choice to opt a student out of testing may vary by test, we request parents specify which tests from which they seek an opt-out for their students. At George Washington Academy, these tests can vary from state-wide testing (e.g. SAGE) to more targeted and formative assessments (e.g. DIBELS). As such we request that the parent/guardian specify which tests they seek to opt their students out of at the time of their request. A sample opt-out form (Form 585-A) has been prepared for parents to use for opt-out request, if they so choose.

* SB 204 mandates that the State Board of Education shall: maintain and publish a list of state assessments, state assessment systems, and software that qualify under this section. However, that list has not yet been produced at the time of this policy modification.